

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., a member of the House Appropriations Committee, said the House today approved the FY 2008 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill by a vote of 268 to 153.

"The transportation and housing bill invests in transit projects in urban areas, provides quality shelter for our homeless and senior residents and restores cuts to critical public housing programs," said Congressman Jackson.

The bill needs to be reconciled with the Senate version and then will be sent to the President for his signature.

The bill includes the following Illinois 2nd District requests:

*\$5 million to provide preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies for Metra's SouthEast Service line.

*\$500,000 to extend CTA's Red Line (Dan Ryan) from its current terminus at 95th Street to 130th Street.

*\$250,000 to PACE Suburban Bus to provide additional funding for the ongoing implementation of vital transit signal priority on Halsted Street between 95th Street and Chicago Heights, and along 159th Street between Hammond and Orland Park.

*\$250,000 for resurfacing and reconstruction of streets in Burnham.

*\$250,000 for street improvements in Thornton, including engineering, lighting, and a traffic signal on Derby Road, an unlighted busy roadway.

*\$100,000 for the completion of a new community center in Dixmoor.

*\$100,000 to enable Riverdale to redevelop the Pacesetter residential properties for commercial and industrial development.

Other portions of the bill which benefit the state of Illinois include:

*\$1.4 billion for Amtrak, an increase of \$106 million, to provide capital and operating assistance to maintain the national passenger rail system.

*\$16.3 billion to renew approximately 1.9 million public housing vouchers, and provide 4,000 new vouchers for non-elderly, disabled, and homeless veteran populations.

*\$120 million for the Revitalization of Severely Distressed Public Housing program, also known as HOPE IV, which provides competitive grants to public housing authorities to revitalize entire neighborhoods adversely impacted by the presence of badly deteriorated public housing projects.

*\$130 million for the Lead Hazard Reduction Program which provides grants to state and local governments to perform lead hazard reduction activities in housing occupied by low-income families.

The measure also requires the Department of Housing and Urban Development to incorporate robust green building and rehabilitation standards into its housing programs, including a focus on improved energy efficiency. It also establishes a new interagency working group to address transportation and housing policy collectively at the federal, state and local level.